

TOP SECRET

NRO review(s) completed.

industry and the public, that the objectives of the Discoverer were to:

- a. Flight test the satellite air frame, propulsion, guidance and control systems, as well as telemetry, tracking and command equipment.
- b. Attain satellite stability in orbiting.
- c. Test techniques for recovery of a capsule ejected from an orbiting satellite.
- d. Test ground support equipment and development of personnel proficiency.
- e. Conduct bio-medical experiments with mice and small primates.

The use of the Discoverer for operations attributed by the Press to Samos was most effective. The sophistication and plausibility of the announced goals for the Discoverer, as essentially a research and development program, proved entirely adequate to shield the Discoverer from significant speculation as to photographic or electronic reconnaissance.

The Discoverer-Samos operation justifies the conclusion that secondary payloads, if productive, plausible and essentially truthful, serve as excellent cover mechanisms.

The Total Security Concept

The increasing vulnerability of our existing cover stories, because of the public interest in the space program and the sophistication of the technical and editorial writers, will undoubtedly lead to more and more reliance on a total security concept.

Critics of the DOD's public information policy, which is leaning toward the total security concept, have voiced positions generally considered to be both plausible and popular. By emphasizing a "cover up" writers opposed to the DOD policy have generated sufficient interest in the matter to cause Rep. John E. Moss, Chairman, Special Sub-Committee on Government Information, to speak out. Rep. Moss agrees that the Government has the authority to withhold information. He has decried, however, the apparently indiscriminate withholding of both launching and non-launching information at the expense of "the desperate need to keep the American people informed about what is happening".

TOP SECRET

~~TOP SECRET~~

The reputable newsletter Space Daily has charged that the DOD directive, while using the facade of national security, is actually covering up our failure as well as the Russian successes. This publication also refers to the "asinine obstinateness" of the DOD in its effort to "hide" its military space activities from the American public by simply dropping all mention of any such activities.

It must be concluded that this tendency toward total security, at least in peace time, will always be under plausible and popular criticism by the news media and will constitute a continuing irritant to the responsible public information officers of the Government.

Executive Action and NRO Responsibilities

There were a number of instances during 1962 where the international crisis required immediate Executive action. In some cases previously prepared cover stories as well as NRO security concepts and methods of operation were superseded by higher authority. As a result a degree of flexibility was required by the Special Security Center and the NRO to implement fast-breaking decisions from the Executive Offices of the President.

U-2 Reconnaissance During the Cuban Crisis

The cover stories developed by the Agency for the continuing U-2 reconnaissance of Cuba were not effectively utilized because of the Executive determination to admit that such reconnaissance was necessary to the national security and to announce that the SAC would continue the flights. All decisions pertaining to cover or policy statements were made the responsibility of the Ad Hoc Committee, which reported directly to the President's immediate staff.

25X1 The SSC, however, acting for the DNRO, instituted a special program, [] which afforded security guidance and security control to all personnel affiliated with the joint CIA-SAC U-2 reconnaissance program which functioned during the interim period preceeding the Executive decision that the SAC would assume the complete tactical responsibility for reconnaissance.

The President's Press Conference Referring to the Camera as a Means of Inspection

On 17 December 1962 a question was asked at the President's

~~TOP SECRET~~

TOP SECRET

Press Conference regarding the inspection of missile sites in Cuba. The President replied to the effect that the camera would be this country's most effective inspection system. He did not elaborate further. This terse statement lead to a number of speculative, but informative, articles in reputable technical and general news organs. Three of these articles are summarized below as examples of the intense interest by journalistic circles in overhead and satellite photographic reconnaissance.

The Washington Post Page 1 Article of 19 December

The Post feature writer, Chalmers Roberts, quoted the President's comments regarding the camera as an inspection system and drew these conclusions:

1. The President was referring to the U-2, the USN Crusader, the USAF RF-101 and the secret photographic reconnaissance satellite known as Samos.
2. The efficiency of the camera in Samos is a matter of great secrecy. The big question is how soon will Samos do the job the U-2 can do. The answer is, "probably in the not too distant future".
3. If the President would reveal the state of the art regarding the Samos camera he would increase trust here at home in our ability to police agreements with USSR. But then Khrushchev would protest this U. S. "espionage".
4. Until now the USSR has made only guarded statements regarding satellite espionage. There is no evidence that they have tried to knock down a Samos, or a Tiros weather satellite.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

5. Both the U. S. and the USSR realize that to knock down a satellite would be to open the door on a whole new phase of East-West problems.

The Space Business Daily Article of 20 December

This reputable daily newsletter for the missile-space industrys began its feature article by quoting the President's comment on the camera as an effective inspection system. It then stated categorically that Samos was rapidly replacing the U-2. It indicated that our improved camera technology means a more rapid deployment of Samos as our watch dog of the Soviet Union. It stated that soon the Samos camera would have an identity resolution competitive with that of the U-2. It described Samos as a camera program which was a significant technical advance over the early Discoverer Program. Other significant points made in this article were that:

1. The first advanced Samos photo package was recovered in April 1962 after four (4) days in Polar Orbit.
2. Regular launches of Samos have taken place since then from Vandenberg Air Force Base.
3. The Soviets are well aware of the Samos photographic capabilities and have been changing their ICBM launching sites to under-ground installations.
4. The result of the Samos photography is that the Soviets now have a much more sophisticated missile installation system and if either the U. S. or USSR launches a missile attack, the result would be a over-kill.

*This was not
felt after
Security clamp
was put on
release to press
re VA FB photo.*

The Time Magazine Article of 28 December

Time quoted the President's comment on the camera as an effective inspection system. The article then made the following points:

1. The U-2 has been getting excellent photographic coverage. It has been utilizing 36 to 100 inch focal length cameras.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

2. Supersonic jets are also getting good pictures.
3. Every electronic signal emanating from Cuba and from ground based radar signals is being detected by U. S. air reconnaissance efforts.
4. Drones are also being used for this purpose.

Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from a study of the plausible denial cover story and total security concepts as well as the three representative news articles are that:

1. Any cover story and any system of total security will be subjected to continuing scrutiny and skepticism by a very sophisticated news media.
2. This news media believes the American public has a right to know all the information that can be developed regarding the efficiency and operational aspects of our photographic and electronic reconnaissance efforts.
3. There have been an increasing number of Executive statements regarding the necessity to continue overhead reconnaissance as a vital part of our national defense effort. At the present time, therefore, our security policies will turn more and more towards the total security concept. This will more effectively prevent the release of unauthorized information regarding the nature and extent of our overhead and satellite reconnaissance as well as the state of the art of our various programs.
4. It follows that in an increasing number of cases an official response of "no comment" may be more beneficial than a cover story. This is believed necessary because the plausible denial concepts are wearing very thin and lead to Press charges of deliberate deceit. This does not mean that the cover story concept should be discontinued. It means that when used it should be productive of an end product for release to the public if necessary, it must be plausible, and it must be truthful as

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

far as it goes. In this regard the secondary payload cover story has proven very successful.

5. The total security concept, during peace time, will always be unpopular with the Press and will be under continual attack by both responsible and irresponsible writers. It should also be expected that there will be elements on Capital Hill severely critical of any incumbent Administration's public information policies. These irritants will constitute a continuing nuisance factor and should be regarded as inescapable side effects of a policy which may not be popular but which provides the most effective security over the long run.

6. Any security guidance regarding cover or public information policy for the USIB or the NRO must include the requirement of ready adaptability if a contingency arises wherein fast-breaking Executive action supercedes previously established security and cover plans.

[Redacted Signature]

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Chief/Public Information and Policy Branch

TOP SECRET